



Family Liaison Office

ROLES OF DOS OFFICES IN RESPONSE TO FOREIGN SERVICE DEATH

Several offices in the Department of State have roles in response to deaths of Foreign Service employees or family members. The responsibilities of these offices are summarized below.

The Operations Center

During non-office hours, the Operations Center at the Department of State performs the following duties in regard to the deaths of overseas Department of State employees and their family members:

- Notify Foreign Service Lounge
- In special circumstances, the Ops Center may be requested to notify next-of-kin.

The Foreign Service Lounge

The Foreign Service Lounge (Employee Service Center) responds to deaths of Department of State employees and family members both overseas and in the U.S., providing the following services:

During office hours, handles all matters relating to notification (unless the family at post has already done it).

- Staff remains on 24-hour call, and is contacted by the Operations Center when there is a death during non-office hours.
- Sends initial telegram authorizing post to begin preparation for shipment of remains and requesting post to send specific information. The Lounge will also send a brief Condolence cable to the family, if present at post.
- Makes all the notifications within the Department and other organizations (Credit Union, etc) and provides liaison between the Post, the Bureau, the Office of Retirement, the Office of Transportation and the families regarding shipment, travel, and the benefits which might be due.
- Drafts an official Condolence Letter for the signature of the Secretary of State.
- Maintains contact with the Post and the family for as long as needed and will provide continued contact for administrative matters and for the completion of necessary forms for benefits.
- **Note:** if the family is abroad, it is necessary to determine ASAP if the spouse wishes to return to post to pack out. If so, Post has authority to issue EVT orders in accordance with regulations in 3FAM (3FAH-1H-3742.1). If EVT orders are issued by Post, "death" orders prepared by PER/CDA should not be issued until spouse has returned to post for pack out. (Each order cancels the previous order). Spouse's final departure from post is then covered by PER/CDA/ASD's orders.

The Family Liaison Office

The Family Liaison Office (FLO) offers client services to all of the Foreign Affairs agencies. FLO does not have a mandate for particular duties in regard to deaths of Foreign Service officers or family members. FLO does, however, have a concern for the welfare of the family of the deceased, and the welfare and morale of the community at post. To this end, FLO provides guidance to the Community Liaison Office Coordinator as to how to respond to the family of the deceased, and how to support the affected community. FLO has material on grief and loss, which the CLO can request.

For those posts that wish to use it, FLO also provides suggestions for the planning of a memorial service.

FLO is available as needed to support and assist the family returning to the U.S., as well as the family of an employee or EFM who dies in the U.S. If requested, FLO will assist a Bureau at the Department of State in planning a memorial service.

The Office of Casualty Assistance

The Office of Casualty Assistance (OCA) was established to provide support and advocacy for Foreign Service employees and family members who are victims, or families of victims, of terrorist or mass casualty incidents. For incidents that take place overseas, OCA provides assistance to all employees and family members under Chief of Mission authority, working closely with all agencies involved. For such incidents in the U.S., the office offers services to Department of State employees and family members only. The office trains and coordinates employees in the Department who have volunteered to assist in mass casualty events, and assigns a point of contact to each family. The office staff support the families, follow up on issues of concern, and advocate efficient and equitable resolutions of problems related to the event, providing these services as long as needed.

